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NOVEMBER 6, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

The President regrets that the Senate Select Committee has publicly discussed the activity known as "Operation SHAMROCK", which was instituted over 25 years ago by President Truman, his Secretary of Defense and Attorney General. Although this was terminated in the Spring of this year because of allegations that portions of the National Security Agency activity were improper, the President has refrained from discussing this publicly in order to avoid any criticism or any implied criticism of former officials who acted in good faith during difficult times in the cold war period and to protect legitimate on-going foreign intelligence activity by the National Security Agency.

Instead, the President has endeavored to make all the information concerning SHAMROCK available to the Senate Select Committee and the Department of Justice in order to assure that appropriate legislation can be developed, if necessary, and the Attorney General can conduct his investigations. The President has tried to act responsibly by taking effective actions to stop possible abuses and prevent any recurrence without seeking publicity when the activity was terminated.

There are two critically important objectives concerning the intelligence community investigations:

1. We must develop the appropriate facts so that legislation, if necessary, can be enacted and any legal action, if warranted, can go forward.
2. We must do this in a manner which does not unnecessarily damage our foreign intelligence capabilities.

The national interest requires a careful balancing of these two objectives.

All of those who are involved with this matter in an official capacity must take care to permit the investigation to go forward in a reasonable manner without damage to our ability to develop appropriate foreign intelligence.

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